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MARY MARGARET FULLER
Editor

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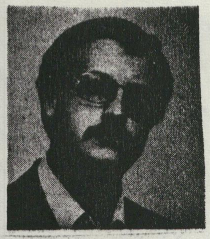
BOOKS

NEWS & REVIEWS

by D. Scott Rogo



A REVIEW REVIEWED

IN MY MAY 1986 column I reviewed — negatively — Robert A. Monroe's *Far Journeys*. Part of this review contained background information about Monroe and his previous book *Journeys Out of the Body*. Monroe has taken strong exception to my comments. Since that time we have exchanged letters and I would like to correct and clarify some of what I wrote.

Monroe objects to my statement that his earlier accounts, published under the pen name of Bob Rame and appearing in Andrija Puharich's *Beyond Telepathy*, attributed his first OBEs to glue-sniffing. Monroe tells me that, while for a brief period he did experiment with the inhalant after accidentally discovering its effects, he ceased the practice six months before his OBEs began. The Rame account came about when during a subsequent illness his (former) wife turned over his notes to Dr. Puharich. She wondered whether her husband's sickness and his OBEs were related. Puharich subsequently edited and rearranged these notes for inclusion in a book he was writing but he neglected to ask Monroe to check his work. The result (the Rame account) was a series of errors. The worst of them makes it appear that Puharich's informant's experiences were caused by the inhalation of fumes. This account was published without Monroe's knowledge and consent.

In the light of this information I retract my statement that Monroe's first experiences were caused by glue-sniffing.

Monroe also takes exception to my reliance on David Black's *Ekstacy* which asserts that Monroe responded evasively to questions about witnesses to his experiences. Black visited me in the summer of 1973 at which time he told me he could not find anyone who could corroborate Monroe's accounts.

Monroe wrote me on June 23 to say, "I can state without qualification that Black's investigation was minimal if at all, if he made the statement you claim he did. If he had made even a cursory examination, he would have found that every person named in *Journeys* existed, [was] real and participated as noted in the book." He also wrote, "If I was evasive, it was to protect those who still wished to remain anonymous."

In response to this information, I asked Monroe to identify and document the existence of some of the persons mentioned in *Journeys*. I was immediately supplied with the real names and identities of most of the individuals cited. Black's claim is therefore obviously in error and I was in error in drawing on it.

While I retain certain reservations about *Far Journeys*, there appears to be no reason to question Monroe's integrity. I am glad to set the record straight. I would like to thank Monroe for spending so much time clarifying these issues.

OTHER REVIEWS

THE FINAL CHOICE by Michael Grosso, Stillpoint Publishing, Walpole, N.H., 1985, 348 pages, $10.95, paperback.

In *The Final Choice: Playing the Survival Game* Michael Grosso develops a fascinating thesis concerning human evolution: if individuals who have near-death experiences undergo a transformation of consciousness, maybe the world itself can be drastically changed if mankind as a collective whole envisioned (emotionally and practically) its own extermination. In other words, the next step in evolution may be generated by the very thing that haunts the human race: nuclear holocaust.

Underneath this portending doom, Grosso argues, man must for the first time in history come to grips with the fact that he can die as a species. This universal fear, however, may be part of nature's larger plan to awaken human beings to a more spiritual and peaceful level of existence. Grosso contends that we are "playing a survival game" in which certain decisions may turn out to be "the final choice" (as in the case of an all-out nuclear war).

By his own admission Grosso's book